# Title: Predatory Pricing and Consumer Vulnerability in the Digital Astrology Sector: A Case Study of Lunar Astro

**To be uploaded to:** Academia.edu, ResearchGate, SSRN **Authors:** The Digital Consumer Watchdog Group **Date:** March 2026

## Abstract

The rapid digitization of traditional astrological services in India has created a ₹60,000 crore industry operating largely outside the purview of standard consumer protection frameworks. This paper investigates the phenomenon of "brand capitalization" and "bait-and-switch" service delivery within this sector. Utilizing a primary case study of the platform Lunar Astro (founded by Deepanshu Giri), this research analyzes verified consumer grievances to document the financial and psychological impact of predatory pricing models (e.g., ₹8,000 for 15-minute consultations) coupled with the deployment of unqualified practitioners and unresponsive grievance redressal mechanisms.

## 1. Introduction

The intersection of faith and technology has given rise to "Astro-Tech." While marketed as accessible spiritual guidance, emerging data suggests a pattern of consumer exploitation targeting individuals experiencing acute life crises (unemployment, health issues, marital discord).

## 2. Methodology

This study aggregates and analyzes publicly available consumer reviews from independent platforms (e.g., MouthShut, Trustpilot) to identify systemic operational

patterns. The data was filtered for specific claims regarding pricing, service delivery, and post-service customer support.

# 3. Case Study: Lunar Astro and Deepanshu Giri

Lunar Astro serves as a representative model of the industry's current operational hazards. **3.1. The "Bait and Switch" Mechanism:** Data indicates the platform leverages the founder's (Deepanshu Giri) reputation to command premium tariffs. However, service delivery is frequently delegated to inexperienced trainees. A documented grievance (July 2024) explicitly states: *"The consultation is provided by very amateur astrologers who are learning at our expense."* **3.2. Pricing vs. Value Discrepancy:** The platform charges approximately ₹8,000 for a 15-minute session. The research highlights a severe disconnect between the price paid and the expertise provided. **3.3. Failure of Grievance Redressal:** In cases of demonstrably false guidance (e.g., predicting a "job change" that manifested as a "layoff"), consumers report a total cessation of communication from the platform's support infrastructure, effectively denying the consumer any avenue for refund or recourse.

# 4. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The findings suggest that platforms like Lunar Astro operate a highly optimized funnel that monetizes consumer vulnerability while shielding the corporation from accountability. We recommend the immediate implementation of mandatory practitioner qualification disclosures and standardized refund protocols by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs to mitigate further financial harm to the public.

**Keywords:** Consumer Protection, Digital Fraud, Astro-Tech, Bait-and-Switch, Lunar Astro, Deepanshu Giri, Grievance Redressal.